



DRAFT



City of Seattle

**FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, December 13, 2011**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Burgess, Michael DeBell, Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis, Chris Korsmo, Julie McCoy, David Okimoto, Kevin Washington, Greg Wong

OTHERS PRESENT: Eric Anderson (SPS), Janet Blanford (SPS), James Bush (HSD/MO), TJ Cosgrove (PHSKC), Jerry DeGriek (Mayor's Office), Holly Ferguson (SPS), Linnea Fichter (Hawthorne PTA), Karl Fields (DPR), Betsy Graef (Council Staff), Kathleen Groshong (HSD), Kacey Guin (OFE), Susan Kinne (HSD), Sharon Knight (HSD), Patricia Lee (City Council Central Staff), Catherine Lester (HSD), Holly Miller (OFE), Susie Murphy (Elementary Consultant), Isabel Muñoz-Colón (OFE), Janet Jones Preston (SPS), Sid Sidorowicz (OFE), Kristi Skanderup (MSSP), Mark Teoh (SPS)

Tim Burgess called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. The minutes from November 8 were approved. T. Burgess acknowledged the service of LOC members who will no longer be serving, including David Okimoto, John Pehrson, Chris Korsmo, and Gaurab Bansal.

Holly Miller introduced Mark Teoh from Seattle Public Schools (SPS) to discuss the school performance reports, district scorecard and segmentation report. She also introduced Cathy Thompson from Seattle Public Schools, presenting on the Creative Approach Schools, a new initiative being developed by the district. M. Teoh presented the school reports and highlighted modifications that have been made to improve the information. T. Burgess asked for clarification on student mobility. M. Teoh said this is the number of students coming in and out of a school in a given year. D. Okimoto asked if the takeaway from the Dearborn Park report is that the school is below the district average every year, but they are steadily improving. M. Teoh said yes, their absolute scores are improving each year, but they are also growing at a rate that exceeds the district average. Michael DeBell said the growth data is one axis of the segmentation calculation and the absolute data is the other, allowing the district to see how schools compare across the district.

Julie McCoy asked if the Performance Levels are calculated using a formula combining the absolute performance and growth. M. Teoh said yes. C. Korsmo said that the achievement gap didn't seem to be considered in determining the Level of the schools. M. Teoh said one gap measure, Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) students vs. non-FRL, is used in the segmentation calculation. C. Korsmo asked what weight the achievement gap carries in determining Levels. T. Burgess asked about year-to-year growth and the comparison to the state numbers. M. Teoh said this is the first year SPS has had access to statewide data to determine a typical growth trajectory for each student from year to year. T. Burgess asked if the district-wide average is compared to the state as well. M. Teoh said yes, that this is a normative measure, so expected growth would be 50% across the state. Eric Anderson said that typical growth is the portion of students performing as well or better than their academic peers across the state (i.e. students with same scores in previous years).

D. Okimoto asked why there isn't more information on the achievement gap. C. Korsmo said she disagrees with the Level system if a school can be awarded a Level 5 when they have a 30-point achievement gap between White and Hispanic students. E. Anderson said that Level 5 is reserved

for schools that are high on absolute scores, and have closed their achievement gap between FRL or non-FRL students. C. Korsmo said that focusing on FRL is not sufficient but that we also need focus on children of color. M. DeBell said the district is not hiding the gaps; the numbers are part of the report. The reason the district uses FRL instead of race is because of the Supreme Court decision that said policy decisions cannot be made based on race. Kevin Washington asked if the algorithms used are publically available. M. Teoh said some of that data is available and is on the website. The actual calculations are not public but can be made available to specific groups. J. McCoy clarified that the only way to get to Level 5 is if schools close the gap between FRL and non-FRL. E. Anderson said he would clarify that in his presentation. Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis asked how many levels are in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Holly Ferguson said there are 5 steps in AYP. M. DeBell acknowledged the Levy support in assisting Mercer to reach a Level 5 status.

E. Anderson reviewed the segmentation report. T. Burgess asked why a Level 1 school with high growth jumps to a Level 3, rather than a Level 2. E. Anderson acknowledged that they had received this feedback but that they have decided not to make any changes to the formula this year, which was established two years ago. E. Anderson explained that a school with high absolute scores, and with a less than 25 point achievement gap between FRL and non-FRL students, attains a Level 5 status. He noted that K-8s are segmented as a single entity this year, rather than one Level for the elementary grades and another for the middle school grades. Greg Wong asked about the discrepancy between the absolute scores of Level 3 schools and how the district allocates resources between these different schools. H. Ferguson said she wasn't sure how funding is allocated intra-level. M. DeBell said that much of the extra supports are for Level 1 and Level 2 schools, and that the formula may need to be revisited. Cathy Thompson said that most of extra resources go to Level 1 and Level 2 schools. M. DeBell said the base funding model does not change, based on segmentation. The funding connected to segmentation is a small part of the overall funding for the school. G. Wong said you don't want to ignore the schools that are still struggling, because they receive a Level 3 distinction. T. Burgess reiterated the point of not jumping schools from Level 1 to Level 3.

J. McCoy asked why growth is included in the formula, rather than just absolute scores. C. Thompson said that, as a principal, her school made huge growth but still had low overall scores, so the strategies used were not acknowledged by the district. Looking at growth allows the district to see where schools are making strong gains and replicate the practice where possible. H. Miller reiterated the point of factoring in closing the achievement gap into the Levels to bring more urgency to this issue. Susan Kinne asked if trends are based on being statistically significant. M. Teoh said no. D. Okimoto said the good news is that the district is on an upward trajectory, but the bad news is that we aren't on target to meet the 2013 goals.

C. Thompson presented on the Creative Approach Schools, a collaboration project between SPS and Seattle Education Association (SEA). T. Burgess asked how a Level 1 school would meet the community and staff approval criteria. C. Thompson said that each Level 1 school is different, and it is possible for a Level 1 school to meet these criteria. T. Burgess asked, even if the community was on board, how likely is it that a Level 1 school could meet the 80% threshold of staff support. C. Thompson said that 80% has been used historically for these types of endeavors and has been deemed necessary for success. H. Ferguson asked about the difference seen in the staffs at Level 1 and 2 schools as opposed to Level 4 and 5 schools, and that Level 1 schools are often the ones that want to do something innovative. H. Miller said her recent meeting with a Level 1 school revealed the barrier to change was the willingness of the staff. H. Miller asked for waivers for Levy Innovation schools within the Creative Approach clause. C. Thompson said that any school can apply for specific waivers that go before the SEA but that the Creative Approach model is really meant for schools that want to do something radically different. She added that nothing precludes schools from being a Levy Innovation school and a Creative Approach school. T. Burgess said that it will be disappointing if Level 1 and 2 schools are not able to capitalize on the freedoms that come with the Creative Approach model. M. DeBell noted language immersion schools as an example as

a creative approach model that has been replicated across the district. L. Gaskill-Gaddis clarified that the Creative Approach schools and Levy-funded Innovation schools are separate processes.

K. Washington asked about the pressures on the district to act quickly for Level 1 and Level 2 schools. C. Thompson said they haven't considered taking over low-performing schools, but they have put protections in place regarding staffing in these schools. H. Ferguson said the district could dictate curriculum to schools, but they can't dictate additional time, without going to the bargaining table. J. McCoy asked how the district plans to help small community groups build capacity to help the schools. C. Thompson noted that Creative Approach Schools will develop a compact that staff will sign agreeing to the proposed school design, and if staff do not comply, it becomes a performance issue. G. Wong asked at what point the district becomes involved, and then asked how schools will be evaluated. C. Thompson said the executive directors will be involved with their schools that are deemed Creative Approach Schools and they will continue to be part of the segmentation and performance measure process. C. Thompson said the timeline is that it goes to the school board in January, but that it has not been approved by the SEA rep assembly. She noted that no additional funding is available as part of this process.

The meeting adjourned at 5:38.